

# Dark Horizons

issue 10 • autumn/winter '74



# DH10 autumn/winter 1974

Produced and Edited for the BFS by Stephen Jones.

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By  
stephen  
jones

Welcome to my second issue at the helm of DARK HORIZONS, I'm sure some of you never expected to see my byline on this editorial, especially after the recent track record by editors of DH.

Firstly, thanks for those of you who have sent me LoC's - I want to know what I'm doing right and what I'm doing wrong - and only YOU, the readers, can tell me; so come on, get your pens out and let me know what you think of this issue.

Which leads me quite nicely into the contents of DH10: We kick off with the first part of Mike Chinn's History of the Death-Days, a skillful blend of sf and fantasy set in the far future of this planet; well-known fan writer Glen E. Symonds has a beautifully atmospheric ghost story which reminded me of the work of M. R. James; and John Hurley contributes an off-beat fantasy, again superbly evocative of mood.

David Sutton rounds off his trilogy of essays about the Cosmic Theme in fantasy with a look at the way the cinema has approached the subject - and discovers it has handled it surprisingly well, considering the reputation usually attached to horror and sf movies; this time our spotlight in fandom falls upon Belgium writer Eddy C. Bertin, probably best known in this country for his short-stories and as the one-time co-editor of SHADOW - Eddy looks at the problems being a writer of fantasy; and I am very pleased to welcome Mike Ashley to the pages of DH with a very well researched article detailing the history of Del Rey's FANTASY FICTION MAGAZINE, including a complete checklist: Many of you will know Mike from his work in SCIENCE FICTION MONTHLY, and he is currently working on a series of books for NEL on the History of SF Magazines.

Once again I've included poetry (an unexpected success in the last issue) with another fine contribution by Peter Wilcockson, Gordon Larkin's Come To Clay was written especially for DH, while Stephen Walker (who himself edits a fantasy/sf poetry 'zine, POLYGLITE IN THE NORTH) makes his first appearance in DARK HORIZONS.

Special thanks are due to the artists who helped me out so much this issue: David Lloyd for his lovely cover illo, Jim Pitts for his drawing - surely one of his finest - for Mike Chinn's story, Alan Hunter, well known as an outstanding fantasy artist for many years, also appears for the first time in the pages of DH, and my own drawing, although not wholly original (the characters were adapted from actual puppets) it was intended as a rather macabre joke - and as such I hope it works.

A few words about the cover reproductions on pages 28 and 33, at the time of writing this I don't know how well they are going to reproduce (Bok's originals were in brilliant pastel colours) - if they don't come out very well, then my apologies beforehand, please put it down to a bit of experimentation that went wrong.

Finally, time to mention contributions again: As I said last issue, I still have a lot of work I recieved when I inherited the DH file that still hasn't been claimed by the authors and artists concerned; an e.a.s. will recieve a prompt reply. And please whenever possible, if you send contributions to DH include an e.a.s.

Thanks...



# The Second by Dragons *mike chinn*

## part one: Designs of the Wizard

"And how fares my old friend, King Belik of Burnharnh?"

"Well enow, my lord".

"Ah, so? You bring a message from him, no doubt?"

Kim-Dar, Captain of the king of Burnharnh's Bodyguard, sighed deeply. The bantering tone of the man before him: King Yahn-Tor of the city of Steff, would have infuriated him, even if he had enjoyed these diplomatic tasks.

"I do, my lord. It..."

"Truly it must be important for Belik to send his favourite."

"Aye, it is very important. I am..."

"Then we would hear it, captain. Pray, do continue."

Kim-Dar choked back the oath that rose like bile in his throat. Steff and Burnharnh had existed on an uneasy truce these past ten years; it would take little to set both cities at each other's throats once more. He fixed his eyes on a spot on the elaborate wall and clenched his sword's hilt tighter.

"The lizard-men, led by Aubeq-Senn, have taken Wennilas. It will not be long before Thae, then Steff and Burnharnh fall beneath their bloody claws. King Belik has urged me to ask whether you consider an amalgam of both our cities' armies, together with that of Thae, would suffice in driving Aubeq-Senn back to the reptile hell that spawned him."

Yahn-Tor frowned. "But only yesterday the sorcerer, Salin Thur, assured me that the lizard-men have every intention of a peaceful co-existence with we True-men."

"And is not Salin Thur a lizard himself, albeit a strange and wilful one?"

"He has not lied before..."

"There is always a first time, my lord." Kim-Dar's patience was all but gone. Anger flashed in the other's eye.

"You may leave us, captain. Tell Belik I will send him troops when I consider the time ripe. If I consider the time ripe." As was usual when he was excited, Yahn-Tor had forgotten the royal "we".

Teeth gritted invisibly beneath his spectacularly-horned helm, Kim-Dar stalked from the gaudy throne-room.

Outside another knight met him. Like Kim-Dar, his helm was decorated with large sweeping metal horns and firmly attached to his breastplate. In the manner of all knights he wore tight-fitting armour, many-jointed on arm and leg to make it flexible. A heavy red riding cloak was slung casually around his neck. He handed Kim-Dar a similar cloak, but purple.

"What outcome?" he asked.

"He will send troops, when he deems fit - which means never."

"You dislike milord king?" His smile could not be seen under his helm, but the humour was in his voice. Kim-Dar took his cloak.

"Twenty years ago, Senan-Dar, I made my last pledge to Xanine and became a knight: one of the only True-men to dare the arid deserts of this dying earth. On that day I lost permanently my real name and became Kim-Dar. Because my father was a knight, my face has never been uncovered in the presence of others; I no longer look at it myself, I'm afraid of what I might see."

"Then a petty king who has never dared the desert, even at night, tries to impress me with words. Aye, I dislike Yahn-Tor."

"Your time as a servant of Xanine has made you bitter, my lord." They strode into the

city's central keep and called for their equars, the horse-like reptiles that all the knights used as the only creatures capable of crossing the endless desert that was once earth.

"Whither now?" asked Seman-Dar.

"Thas. Mayhap we will be greeted more cordially by Dainar."

They mounted their equars, which were heavily armoured to hide their reptilian features, and rode through one of the city gates into the desert and the glaring sun.

Not three leagues from Eteff, the lizard horde attacked. Although heavily outnumbered the knights drew their steel broadswords and defended themselves ferociously. Five lizard-men were dead upon the thirsty sand before both men were overwhelmed and rendered unconscious.

When Kim-Dar painfully opened his eyes, he was in a dim cave guarded by two lizards. To his left, Seman-Dar was already awake and tugging at his rhaet-leather bonds.

"A fine situation this," remarked the younger knight dryly. "Why would you say they want us, captain?"

"Information, most like."

"Perfectly correct, my dear captain." The voice was harsh and icy cold. Kim-Dar turned at the sound of it.

"Salin Thur!" he snarled.

The lizard sorcerer hissed a humourless laugh and bowed mockingly. "How pleasant to see you again."

"Indeed? Never mind your sarcasm, reptile, what do you want of us?"

"Not I, captain..."

"True," came a second voice. "It is by my order that you are here." Another lizard joined Salin Thur. He was a tall being, more muscular than was usual for his species.

"And you," said Seman-Dar, "are Aubeq-Senn?"

The tall one nodded. "Aubeq-Senn. Leader of the successors to the petty human race."

"Not yet, lizard," said Kim-Dar, quietly.

"Ah, but the information you will give me will ensure that it comes to pass."

Kim-Dar laughed harshly. "You do not deserve your position if you are naive enough to believe that we will say aught; even under torture."

Seman-Dar gave another tug at his bonds, and felt them give slightly. Yet even as he did so a chill ran down his back: he was sure the wizard was looking at him. But, why had he said nothing to Aubeq-Senn?

The tall lizard was hissing obscene laughter. He tapped Kim-Dar's helm. "This pretty mask, now. I have always wanted to see what a knight looks like underneath."

The knight recoiled in horror. "That would be blasphemy!" he cried. "Xanine would strike down any who dared look on the face of one of his acolytee!"

"So is your belief. It would be an interesting experiment to test that religion."

With an effort, Kim-Dar composed himself. "You threaten emptily, reptile, for you know that every knight has the key to his helm in a place known only to himself."

Aubeq-Senn shrugged. "You forget the talents of Salin Thur."

At a signal the sorcerer walked towards Kim-Dar and stared deeply into his eyes. The captain tried desperately to turn away, but his muscles no longer obeyed him: a cold strength had seized and now held them. At length he felt a release and Salin Thur spoke.

"Inside his sword pommel."

Aubeq-Senn walked to where the knight's weapons had been stacked. He picked up one of the swords and tugged at the pommel, then twisted it. It came off suddenly and a small gilt key tinkled to the floor. Picking this up, Aubeq-Senn advanced upon Kim-Dar, who was beginning to realize true fear as he twisted vainly away.

Seman-Dar was also wrenching madly when he felt a snap and guessed the things had parted. On impulse, he decided to wait his chance, rather than risk escape immediately. Instead, he stared in horrified fascination as Aubeq-Senn's claws seized his captain's helm and fitted the key into an almost invisible lock: There was a click and, with a cry of triumph, the reptile pulled the helm off.

The pale and wasted face of Kim-Dar glared up at an invisible spot for a second, fear and anger both burning on the ravaged features, then the knight crumpled like an old

parchment.

Before Aubeq-Senn could touch him, Salin Thur spoke.

"He is dead, my lord".

Aubeq-Senn stiffened.

"Dead? How? What could have killed him?"

"Who can say? Perhaps the shock of losing his helm after so many years, perhaps his heart - he does look old - or..."

"Or mayhap it was Xanine's doing," Seman-Dar finished the sentence, hatred smoldering in his eyes. Salin Thur gave him an angry look.

"The lizard race recognises no gods, knight!"

"But He may see you as the filth you are and take His revenge for this foul deed!"

"Have a care, knight," said Aubeq-Senn. "Your own future is not yet so secure."

"No? But you will not kill me: I am too valuable alive." Seman-Dar began to judge the distance between himself and the entrance.

"A perceptive human, this. A rare specimen."

"Aye, my lord, but therefore a very dangerous one," said Salin Thur. "Perhaps it would be wiser to kill this one and take others. This one smacks of superior strength and intellect; he may escape and inform the True-men of our strength and allies. Aye, kill him!"

"No!" Seman-Dar leapt suddenly to his feet, smashing the lizard under the jaw with his helm. As Aubeq-Senn collapsed, Seman-Dar had reached the piled weapons and seized his sword, then rushed for the cave's entrance. The two guards turned to stop him, only to be hacked bloody by a blade that whirled so quickly its movement was blurred.

Seman-Dar scrambled down a slope running from the cavernmouth. He spied three equars standing not four yards away and ran erratically for one.

As he spurred his stolen mount toward Burnharnh, arrows falling about him, he wondered if he would be in time to warn humanity about the now great lizard threat. He was sure Yahn-Tor was one of the "allies" Salin Thur had mentioned, yet who were the others?

Would they even listen in Burnharnh?

And so the lizard hordes spread out. Beneath their relentless tread fell Thas, Steff, Sequis, even Burnharnh. Those True-men who lived through the slaughter fled north, to the colder marches where the lizard-men feared to go because the cold made them slow and vulnerable. There, in the caves, humanity became united for the first time since the start of the Death-Days, when Earth began its slow burning death.

It was a day of celebration in the caves: three squires were to be made full knights. Seman-Dar, as senior knight, spoke the service.

"...the honour of knighthood is hereditary. From the moment of birth, the son of a knight has his head enclosed in a mask so that none save Xanine, God of War and Armament, knows his true face.

"Then, at the Age of Ascent, he has the choice whether or not he wishes to be a knight. If not, his mask is removed and he is free. If he does so wish, he is given a new mask until the time he becomes a true knight.

"These three: Ean Koor, Ean Thall, his brother, and Rolla Tonn, have made their vows and are here today to be knighted. Are you ready?"

The three boys nodded. Seman-Dar took up a gorgeously horned helm and placed it upon the first boy's masked head.

"Ean Koor, henceforth shall you be Koor-Dar, be you brave, true and let none see your face."

Koor-Dar stood and bowed. "I shall, my lord."

The other boys were dealt with in the same way. The ceremony was ended as Seman-Dar handed each young knight a small gilt key.

"Take, then, these keys; lock your helms and ensure that even in death none may know its hiding place and gaze upon your face." The three bowed in turn and left. Seman-Dar sat down with a sigh as his own son, Yulin-Dar, walked up to him. He gazed around at the disappearing crowds.

"So the sham continues, sire," he said.

The older man shook his head sadly. "There was a time when twenty squires would be knighted at one time. Our birthrate is dropping."

"While the deathrate goes up. 'Tis these cooler lands. The air brings new germs to plague us. Last month forty-two died through ague and the water disease. If we stay here longer we will all perish."

"Are we so like the lizard-men then, that we must needs have warmth to live?"

"'Tis how the True-men have lived for long years, sire. We have become -eh, adapted to the warm desert winds."

"Then we die, Yulin-Dar; be it through germs or lizard-men's swords."

At that moment a squire ran up to the two men. He bowed breathlessly.

"Milorde. A lizard messenger awaits outside the caves' entrance."

Seman-Dar stood up hurriedly. "This far north? I did not think they dared. My cloak, boy. Quickly."

The equire brought him a heavy red riding cloak and helped him don it. It was not very cold here, but Seman-Dar was old, and prone to arthritis. He walked to the entrance, aided by Yulin-Dar, and saw a tall lizard-man standing on the sand, swathed in thick furs. Where he had got them from, Seman-Dar could not guess. The lizard threw back his hood and Seman-Dar gasped.

"Aubeq-Senn!"

The other bowed. "Correct. And you, if memory serves me well, are Seman-Dar; although 'tis some forty years since last we met."

"Are lizards immortal then? You look no older for it."

"Not immortal, True-man, but our lives span longer than your own."

Seman-Dar shivered. "To business, Aubeq-Senn. What brings you to the domains that lizards fear?"

"Lizards fear no domain," chided the other. "My presence proves that. May I enter yond caves? These rhaet furs are warm, but will never replace the sun."

Seman-Dar nodded and stepped aside to allow the taller being to enter the caves. Once inside, Aubeq-Senn stripped off some of his furs and sat next to a fire, hissing his pleasure.

"A cosy home you have here, Sir Knight. For humans." His eyes glittered sardonically.

"Your purpose here?" asked Seman-Dar wearily. A sudden dizziness overtook him, but he tried to hide it. Aubeq-Senn looked quizzically at Yulin-Dar.

"My son," explained Seman-Dar. "He will hear whatever you have to say."

"Indeed?" mused the lizard. "Very well. I come to offer you, all of you, amnesty. If you come with me now, you will all be reinstated in one of the occupied cities, and looked after."

"Surrender and imprisonment," murmured Seman-Dar. Then, more loudly, "Why should we agree, lizard?"

"Why should you not?"

"We are safe here..."

Aubeq-Senn laughed sharply; Yulin-Dar cringed at the inhuman noise. "You are all dying human. Do not seek to fool me, Salin Thur has told me that the cooler climate affects you almost as badly as it does lizards. If you accept my offer, you will be warm again."

"But not likely to live any longer. And what if I kill you, now?"

Again the lizard hissed a laugh. "I am protected by one of Salin Thur's charms; anyone striking at me will die instantly."

"So it is a game of bluff, with the future of our races as the stakes. Then I reject your offer."

Aubeq-Senn shrugged and picked up his furs. "It is your future, True-man." He began to walk to the entrance.

"Give my regards to your pet wizard," said Seman-Dar.

Aubeq-Senn turned at the caves' mouth. "Salin Thur has vanished. No one has seen him for almost a month." Then he left.

In Seman-Dar's own personal cave, Yulin-Dar said: "Was Aubeq-Senn's proposal so unreasonable?"

His father stared at him in horror. "We would be caged in, like animals, unable to defend ourselves. It would not be long before Aubeq-Senn began to order our destruction. You do not know him as I do."



"Better a quick death than a lingering one here. Besides, if we can hold out long enough our numbers would grow once more. Eventually, we could strike back at the lizards."

"You live in a dream world, my son. Aubeq-Senn is not such a fool as to allow the human race to grow sufficiently enough to defeat him." Seman-Dar drew in a deep breath and coughed; his eyes began to prickle. He ordered his cloak again, the cold was getting to him. "I would not surrender to Aubeq-Senn were I the last True-man on Earth!"

"But why do we not do as he bids? If your suspicions are correct we will be but trading one doom for another. We have nothing to loose...sire, are you well?" He leaned forward in concern. The old man was trembling, and his eyes under his helm were glazed.

"Of course I am well!" But his voice was weak. "You are us-using the same ar-arguments ..." Trembling violently, he suddenly collapsed onto the rocky floor. He coughed again, and this time water-like fluid filled his mouth. He retched.

Yulin-Dar sprang to his feet. "Xanine's Teeth! 'Tis the water disease! Help here... help!"

Six men dashed into the cave. A physician knelt beside the now still body of Seman-Dar. "Too late, Sir Knight. His welfare is now Xanine's affair."

Yulin-Dar looked down sorrowfully at the frail body of his father. "Bury him, quickly." Then he had another thought.

"And send a messenger to find Aubeq-Senn, and bring him here."

Far away, looking in his glass, a lizard sorcerer nodded his satisfaction; and prepared for the next stage.

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# *Of The Ring Of Jarcoon*

## (A LOVE BEYOND THE BLACK LINE OF KRIES)

THE BOND OF KAELESTRA  
THE RING OF JARCOON  
THE LOVE OF THE LOST ONES  
THE SIGH OF THE MOON SHADOWED WORLDS  
WHERE  
DARK DISMAL DAYS  
COMMANDED HEARTS  
AND COLD GLASS FACED PROVIDERS  
WRENCHED LOVE FROM THE EYES OF LOST FOLK  
WHOSE ONLY DESIRE WAS TOO DANGEROUS TO BE ALLOWED THEM.

"KILL: DRATH TO THE PROVIDERS. WE NEED THE KIND OF LOVE  
FOREVER KNEW."

- THE BOND OF KAELESTRA  
THE RING OF JARCOON  
THE LOST LOVE OF THE FORGOTTEN PEOPLE  
THE HOPELESS HELP OF A SILENT MOON.

(JULY 19 1974).

## Stephen Walker

# THE COSMIC IN FILMS

By David A. Sutton

'Geometry Beyond the Curves of Space' (Book title glimpsed in DON'T LOOK NOW).

"I know I've never completely freed myself of the suspicion that there are some extremely odd things about this mission." (Hal 9000 in 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY).

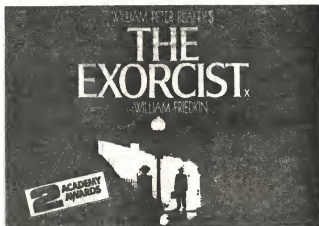
"It is this, or that. All the Universe or nothingness" (Cabal in THINGS TO COME).

In searching for meaningful values in Fantasy Cinema, I would define the "cosmic" as the essence of the artists search for something special in mankind's existence. This something is a grasping for the Universe, the gulfs of time and space that seem a mighty power, a longing for the god-like region he wishes to attain or appreciate.

One doesn't have to look largely at the science fiction or horror cinema to find cosmicism: Satyajit Ray's THE MUSIC ROOM has a cosmic perspective and so does Dennis Hopper's RASHO MON where, in the collage images of an LSD trip, Peter Fonda sees his own future death. A sense of time dislocation is thus evinced. In Ray's film, the financial decline of a noble Indian family is set against the aristocrat's love of music. The climactic episode in the music room which leads eventually to the release in death of the patrician is, like the film as a whole, a haunting vision. However, the fantastic cinema tends to do the cosmic more justice, since it is inherently saturated with the unearthly from the outset. The way in which it is put across is different of course, and one finds the spirituality of 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY vying for cosmic potential with the amorphous horror of DON'T LOOK NOW, two films I shall look at more closely further on.

At a superficial level it could easily be argued that the horror films has little to do with cosmicism. The choking, muffled, totally repulsive shower murder in Hitchcock's PSYCHO displays a horror that is mortifyingly earthly. Surprisingly though, and if we may now talk about it dispassionately after the asinine furore, William Friedkin's THE EXORCIST - as elegant a horror film as one might expect - has an overwhelmingly obvious scene of cosmicism: At its beginning we are shown an archeological dig in Northern Iraq, where Father Merrin (Max Von Sydow) scrapes away some soil from a hole to reveal first a talisman, then a carving. As the scene proceeds we realize that "something" has been released from bondage at the dig: the wind rises, howling around the stone statue of the demon Pazuzu, his huge phallus erect before the wind. Dogs snarl and fight to clench the realisation. The whole sequence could so easily be Lovecraft and his conception of the "Old Ones" ensconced until unwittingly released. In fact, these opening shots take little from Blatty's novel and it is essentially more of the film; to the book only a brief introduction. THE EXORCIST, indisputably, is a horror film and I think one of the better products of the cinema in the genre. The commotion over the gruesome elements on behalf of the critics embodies the same attitude critics held for some of Hammer's past films. However, Friedkin's opus does not wallow in gratuitous violence and degradation and in fact some scenes are pure terror, as distinct from horror. The menacing wardrobe sequence for instance (handled with so much skill that a similar incident in Freddie Francis' TORTURE GARDEN with a piano looks ludicrous), and later when Father Merrin arrives to exorcise Pazuzu, we hear from the bedroom above the most blood freezing shriek, "M-a-r-r-i-n!" But this is to digress from the essential point, that THE EXORCIST is lifted beyond the merely diabolic to a cosmic level even if most of the film is steeped in the horror tradition. One is acutely aware though, that the possessed girl Regan (Linda Blair) is inhabited by a demon from another world, power enough to the cosmic notion of aliens on Earth.

It is debatable whether the best part of Roger Corman's THE HAUNTED PALACE is the credits sequence in which we see, in negative, a spider spinning a web to entrap the butterfly



ELLEN BURSTYN · MAX VON SYDOW · LEE J. COBB · KITTY WINN · JACK MCGOWRAN  
 JASON MILLER · LINDA BLAIR · WILLIAM PETER BLATTY  
 Executive Producer: NOEL MARSHALL · Screenplay by WILLIAM PETER BLATTY · Based on the novel  
 by William B. Yeats · A Warner Communications Company · Released by Columbia TriStar Pictures  
 Hearst/Time-Song/MCA/Columbia TriStar

feature, an aspect the latter film (especially when one thinks of *The Colour out of Space*, the story on which it was based) should almost certainly have conveyed. While we are on the subject of Lovecraft in celluloid, it might be an idea to mention the best of the lot, David Greene's *THE SHUTTERED ROOM*, which, despite an unsympathetic Gig Young as the male lead, remains the most spiritual of the "series". Yet we reflect, the story was August Derleth's anyway.

Jacques Tourneur, virtuoso of understatement, in *NIGHT OF THE DEMON*, gives a particular fine example of the supernatural cinema translated without verbosity into a thrilling conflict between the forces of evil and, not good, but scepticism. The grotesque appearance of the devil at the climax is potently cosmic in its awesome, ancient aspect. Also, earlier on, a bubbling cloud pursues Dr. Holden (Dana Andrews) through the woods, conveying a cogent image of the unutterably unknown. In his 1942 film for Val Lewton, *CAT PEOPLE*, Tourneur was already aware of the power of reticence to impart the exquisitely disquieting atmosphere his films seem to emanate, and one scene in particular, in a swimming baths at night with the dancing shadows from the water, holds an unearthly tension.

It would appear peculiar to films based on witchcraft and satanism (if I may generalise for a moment) that they have a tendency to contain a note of cosmicism, whereas other genre films, of the Dracula and Frankenstein variety, do not. Offhand, I can think of none - and that includes both the Universal '30s run and Hammer Films in the '60s. Yet, the silhouetted, wind-swept hill over which Death trails his new found minions in Bergman's *THE SEVENTH SEAL* remains a chilling example of a sublimely nightmarish cosmic image.

Science fiction cinema, like science fiction, largely ignores its potential cosmic relevance. This is probably because it burdens itself with a technology to a degree where concepts beyond or outside the limitations imposed by that technology are stultified. Luckily, not all of films fall by the wayside. John Boorman's very fine *ZARDOZ* has a particularly bizarre scene in which Zed (Sean Connery) enters the mirror world of the crystal, his image reflected ad infinitum as he runs helplessly about. The thought of him becoming minute enough to enter the crystal, itself of far vaster importance than the

which later lands on it. It is enhanced, like the rest of the film, by Ronald Stein's splendidly appropriate music that adds a sullen, fatalistic, doom-laden aura to the meanderings of Price and Chaney. Although a ponderous and atmospheric horror film, typical of the Corman/Poe ilk, it has a moment of inspired cosmic terror when, only half revealed, we see something, decidedly monstrous, moving and crawling in a pit. Reticence with the monster, in this case, adds to its effectiveness. Unlike the companion Lovecraft film, *MONSTER OF TERROR* (Dir. Daniel Haller), it did have this redeeming

world of the Vortex, is totally beyond science. Bowman's essay in futurism becomes more a fantasy, and a cosmic one at that, than sf. In another example of men miniaturized, Fleischer's *FANTASTIC VOYAGE*, whose special effects vary between the creditable (the fraught journey through the heart) and the not so well conceived (a trampoline-like bounce around an obviously fake-looking lung), has some sequences of timeless beauty when the submarine "Proteus" travels through a bloodstream alive with colour as corpuscles drift in plasma. The sense of man the infinitely small set against the macrocosm is without doubt conveyed in no uncertain manner. But in almost non-visual terms, it is William Cameron Menzies who reaches a peak in *THINGS TO COME* whose climatic finale has Cabot (Raymond Massey) watch the spaceship through a giant lens, making his violently patriotic speech for the Universe. Swelled up by Bliss's powerful music, the scene holds tremendous cosmic prowess, even though it lacks within itself a visual counterpart.

Robert Wise's *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* has as its germ a moral that is still relevant today, if not more so with the nuclear doomsday clock standing at nine minutes to midnight. His vision is elevated by Michael Rennie's portrayal of the alien Klaatu, who significantly underplays his role as Earth's champion for peace. Significantly, Bruce Dern's similar role in Trumbull's *SILENT RUNNING* lapses because of the script's necessity of having him paranoid about his, quite rightful, beliefs (a sop to those faceless industrialists with all the money?). In the Wise film, Rennie has the technology - as does Dern on a smaller scale - and imposes his will by strength, but with compassionate understanding of the human race. Further, *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* has Gort, the giant, immovable, indestructible robot, a symbol of power beyond man's comprehension. The result is to make of Robert Wise's film a triumphant appraisal of man's future in cosmic terms. Wise later did *THE HAUNTING*, a film fraught with a terrible confrontation between four psychic researchers and the ghosts they come to study, which, despairingly, is the antithesis of his science fiction film. Yet, it could be vouchsafed that one moment when Eleanor (Julie Harris) finds herself gripping a non-existent hand, has about it the terrifying substance of the implicitly macabre. Perhaps not truly cosmic in the sense we are discussing, but quite genuinely eerie in a way dissociated with the rest of the film.

In an article such as this, it would be remiss of me not to mention Stanley Kubrick's 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY, a film that, almost from the beginning, assumes cosmic proportions. In the "Dawn of Man" sequence we see the monolith, a symbol of extraterrestrial power of unknown quality. If the monolith is puzzling at first, then by the end of the film it has compounded the mystery because we, like the characters, really don't know the aims of the aliens. We know that each time man finds the black slab he is given a technological boost in order to make that fateful rendezvous out at Jupiter, yet the final comically awesome juxtaposition - Bowman looking to Earth as a foetus - still tells us little in intellectual terms of what has and is about to happen. The scene is obviously symbolic and works on an emotional level, the swell of Strauss' "Also Sprach Zarathustra" feeding it. In fact, much of the film's emotional strength relies on the succinct choice Kubrick made with his music. Earlier on in the proceedings, for instance, the space-station link-up is elevated by the "Blue Danube" waltz. The huge circular space-wheel rolls through space, blending perfectly with the musical accompaniment: there couldn't be a better choice, and to ensure our appreciation in cosmic terms, Kubrick tracks inside the turning wheel, showing the immensity of the station.

Of course 2001's supreme piece of cosmicism is Bowman's (Keir Dullea) trip through the star-gate, the blinding, headlong flight through a tunnel of colours surely a symbol of a speed faster than light, or an alternative means of motion. Bowman sees

**Epic drama of adventure and exploration!**



FROM THE STANLEY KUBRICK PRODUCTION

**2001: a space odyssey**

UNIVERSAL SUPER PANAVISION and METROGLOR

**Epic drama of adventure and exploration**



HOW PREPARED BY STANLEY KUBRICK PRODUCTION

# 2001: a space odyssey

CINEMA SUPER PANAVISION... METROCOLOR

erupted by the cyclopean events that surround him. We, the audience, are similarly intoxicated, but having tasted the cosmic, our elation is, quite rightly, brimming.

In Nicolas Roeg's *DON'T LOOK NOW*, the subtle blend of horror, the supernatural (precognition) and the comic, make this one of the finest genre films to emerge in a long time. Not only does it have the most superb photography (a crumbling, ancient Venice exuding its aura throughout most of the film), and cunning narrative construction, but also the perfect casting: Donald Sutherland (John Baxter, an architect who is psychic) and Julie Christie (his wife, Laura). The cohesion of these constituents soundly structures the film into a remarkably fulfilling experience.

The ingenious composition of a Venice whose physical decay in its stone facades (also reflected in the work of a loathsome murderer) and the interior shots of churches and the police headquarters, whose austere but magnificent marble halls suggest faceless, but in this case impotent, power, mix with the central plot of Donald Sutherland's restoration of a church and the focus of his occult powers, the earlier death of his daughter in England. Roeg assumes just the right note of insidiously cosmic terror very early in the film: Sutherland is viewing some slides of the interior of a church. Outside his son and daughter play. He looks puzzled at one slide which shows stained glass windows and pulpit, but in the pulpit there is an unusual human-shaped red smudge. He then spills something on the slide and a

macabre red blot oozes across the projected image from the shape. At this precise moment he has a premonition about his daughter (she drowns, but we are not aware of the fact at this stage) and he jumps up, dropping the slide to the sofa where we catch a glimpse of a book jacket, "Geometry Beyond the Curve of Space". The cosmic significance is immediately set with this absolutely

shimmering crystals ahead which offer the most tantalising aspect of the trip for one can only assume that these are part of the alien technology; thus these and the monolith are the only tangible evidence of extraterrestrials. This is followed by a vision of creation, the formation of the galaxies and the tenuous web of primeval matter pulsing out, and this in turn is followed by a bizarre flight over strange landscapes. The whole scene is a rigorous attack on the brain, an overwhelming series of visuals that overbalance the slow pacing of the rest of the film. (Compare it, for example, with the agonisingly slow space scene in the pod outside the Jupiter ship where Bowman tries to retrieve his dead companion, Poole). But Kubrick packs his whole punch into those fleeting moments to create the illusion of a man awed, dwa-

Daphne du Maurier's shattering psychic thriller.



Julie Christie

Donald Sutherland

"DON'T LOOK NOW"

hair-raising scene, and we see again the projected image, a suffusion of colour bubbling out from the menacing red blob in the pulpit.

The end of DON'T LOOK NOW, perhaps no less impressive, is dominated by pure horror, with nothing supernatural about it, yet the events leading up to it reflect the cosmicism of the film as a whole. A Venice at night, suffocating with swirling fog, has a primal, stagnant and wholly evil feel to it. We are already tense with worry because of the preceding sequence with the two old women (one of them blind and a psychic medium) and Sutherland's frantic run amid the black, glistening buildings, the fog billowing to the ominous, booming drone of the soundtrack, is eerily unearthly.

DON'T LOOK NOW is superlative and goes a long way beyond the contrivances in the genre of subtlety in the fantastic cinema. Ross's sophistication with cinema (he did the photography for Truffaut's *PARRENHEIT 451* incidentally) has given us a visual treat more convincingly disquieting in contemporary terms than Tourneur's *NIGHT OF THE DEMON*. It is saturated with palm-sweating apprehension (Sutherland's near-death when a hanging platform he is working on collapses beneath him is a masterpiece of exquisite panic) and for me is one of the most genuinely frightening films the cinema has yet produced.

In fact, if I sat and thought a little more, I may well come up with further examples of cosmic cinema in the fantasy genre, but there is, I should imagine, enough food for thought in those films which have been discussed already. I will leave you, therefore, with a quote from Colin Wilson on which to contemplate: "The will feeds on enormous vistas; deprived of them, it collapses."

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# Children Singing

## by Glen E. Symonds

The grounds of ruined Ash Wood sanatorium were quiet, filled by the silence of night, illuminated by the silver radiance of the moon. It was strange ground for Charlie Green, though he had lived in the district for years and knew the surrounding fields and lanes like the back of his hand. Only the scarcity of rabbits and other creatures to shoot had driven him there at all.

Charlie scowled thoughtfully as he moved the heavy, old fashioned twelve-bore higher on his shoulder and stared at the building before him. Though the place was described by locals as a ruin it was ninety nine per-cent complete, with just the windows and a few doors missing, since it was built originally as a children's hospital for those unfortunate suffering from tuberculosis, many of whom spent their entire childhood there.

Charlie became sad when he remembered the young lives which had ceased, come to an end in this place, the loneliness of those small hearts when the disease was rampant. Later, when it was - in the main - defeated, Ash Wood fell into decay and disuse, explaining the silence that surrounded him now.

He was strolling across an open space, previously used as a lawn, though now an expanse of rough, weed-grown land, with roots that tore at his boots, attempting to trip him. The illumination from the full moon high overhead was bright and he could easily make out details of the old sanatorium and its surrounding grounds.

This large object before him at first appeared shadowy; then he saw it was in fact an old roundabout of the sort on which children play. Of course, they spent lazy, hot summer

days here, their pale disease drawn features wreathed in smiles, thin arms waving as they rode.

It was so quiet Charlie heard his breath rasping, unnaturally loud in the stillness of the night. The sadness penetrated to the core of his being and became a throbbing ache near his heart. The children were gone, in their place there was only the melancholy night.

The sound was nearly a scream, a grating, pain filled shriek making his heart pound, sweat appearing on his forehead. Seconds passed before Charlie placed the source of the noise, eventually tracing it to the ancient roundabout, now slowly turning. Charlie continued moving forwards, shivering as he went, watching the shadowy form of the roundabout spinning, a perpetual journey to nowhere. He realized how strange it was the thing should be working, there was no trace of wind, even a breeze, to cause the phenomenon. Still it moved, emitting a noise that set his teeth on edge. He stood watching, wondering.

Charlie scratched the top of his bald head, beneath the worn green tribby and carefully pulled the dirty muffler tighter around his neck.

The old roundabout continued spinning at the same rate, neither gaining or losing speed. Charlie considered various improbable and impossible theories to explain the motion, though none of them came near solving the problem, the thing remained as much a mystery as before. He was, however, a practical man, with no time for wasting on idle speculation.

The hospital was spread before him, a brooding, grey giant, sleeping through the night. Charlie was fascinated by the sprawling mass of brickwork, possessing a power which drew him, a magnetism emanating from deep within the dark interior.

He screwed his eyes up, staring at one of the darkened, glassless windows on the second floor, trying to observe something he could sense rather than see; a shadowy outline a little way from the gaping frame. A noiseless, stationary figure. Charlie was sure he was not mistaken, positive his eyes were not playing tricks; after all, he was a countryman, well used to the night. The object was occasionally struck by a ray of silver light which gave it the appearance of white marble, cold stone.

Who on earth could be in the old hospital this time of night, or was he, after all mistaken? Surely he was alone, the only human being in the grounds of Ash Wood, there would be no one poking about... But then, it could be a tramp or someone needing a place to sleep; the old ruin was preferable to sleeping in the cold of the night.

The figure disappeared, or at least Charlie could not see it, perhaps whoever it was stepped back from the window, or moved to another room.

He found himself suffering from curiosity and began moving forwards. The hospital grew larger, a mountain of brick, a creature of night, brooding. To one side there was a large, main entrance behind which - Charlie supposed - lay an imposing hall, as hospitals usually boast. Slightly to his left he could see a smaller entrance, shadowy and almost invisible. This section of the edifice was supported by a raised concrete platform, running the length of one side. A short flight of steps gave access and Charlie moved cautiously towards these, to the accompaniment of the rusty, grating roundabout.

Climbing the steps, he made his way along the concrete, towards the entrance and after hesitating a few seconds, moved within. The atmosphere was completely different from outside, the air cold, his footsteps echoing through the old, disused building. The walls gave off a glowing effect and seemed to absorb even slight radiance a millisecond before hurling it back, to confuse more than aid his movements.

*The roundabout continued moving, gyrating, neither faster or slower, as though it would go on forever, a journey with no destination. There was an icy coldness, enveloping the metal, the rusty screaming of the ageing, slowly disintegrating form, caressing the whirling mass in the cold arms of night; seen only by the silver moon, moving through the darkness, partially veiled by fleeing clouds.*

*The voice, gently singing could have been the whisper of the wind dancing through trees, scattering leaves in mad disarray, or some small animal crying alone. A human voice, a young voice, a child's voice, words nearly old as children themselves; a tune lost within past aeons. There was nothing, no one visible, though the voice came from the rusty, oil starved roundabout, the words*

*clear, as it gently spun.*

Charlie moved slowly, stumbling his way down a short corridor until he could observe a staircase in the shadows before him. Realizing the necessity for using his torch - though having no desire to advertise his presence, either in the hospital or the grounds - he began fumbling through the large pocket of his dirty and well-worn overcoat.

Even the click of the torch seemed a shattering explosion in the quietness, the sound flowing away from him and eventually losing itself in the dark.

It was a typical hospital building. The thin, weak, yellow torch beam illuminated previously white walls, now dirty or cracked with age, high ceilings and below, a marble floor; the staircase - of the same material - still possessed a polished wood banister and led straight upwards a few yards, before turning sharply to the right.

There was a soft, whispering noise, which made him strain his ears, sweating hands clasp the shotgun tighter, eyes widening to pierce the darkness. It was barely audible and Charlie struggled mentally to place the sound, it was something the old man had heard before. Yee...it was fabric or cloth brushing softly, curtains being blown gently against a window perhaps, or...a dress, nightclothes as someone moved within them.

He shivered, though fighting for calm, there was no point being carried away, imagining things; there certainly could be no one wearing nightclothes here, impossible, completely ridiculous!

He would try upstairs, search the whole place, determined to satisfy his curiosity. Charlie began to climb the stairs, cautiously probing the way ahead and to the side with the torch beam, weak and yellow. Slowly he climbed, one step, two, counting them mentally. On the sixth step something moved above, a draught of icy air striking his face, a coldness passing through him, every inch of his body shivering. Gazing upwards he saw a figure, a small figure descending, moving nearer... Charlie stumbled, lost his footing and fell on one knee, muttering a curse of pain; at the same time the torch slipped from his trembling fingers, clattering down the stairs, landing at the bottom with a tinkle of broken glass. There was darkness.

Suddenly being thrust in blackness Charlie was completely lost, unable to move. He managed to regain his footing, clasp the twelve-bore tightly, still conscious of the noise descending, cascading down, a soft whisper of cloth approaching. The air grew steadily colder and Charlie trembled, gradually becoming accustomed to the gloom, though it was much darker away from the entrance. He stood there shivering, barely able to discern the outline of the figure coming downstairs. Fear burst through him, an icy explosion, the intense cold filling his body.

The figure whispering down was two steps away, still approaching, though making no attempt to speak. Charlie's only concern was escape, be as far away as possible; but he was paralyzed, unable to move, confused by the near-darkness and ruled by fear. He saw an object stretch from the figure towards him; an arm, questing the darkness.

He stepped back, forcing himself to retreat.

"Please..." he gasped, "leave -"

Charlie flinched, the left side of his face trembling as the hand touched him; he could feel the fingers, the palm, as they brushed his skin. It was cold, freezing cold, filling him with a sense of blackness, total desolation. A small, bony hand, the hand of a child...

He moved back once more, his body quivering with fear, horror, but this time misjudging the position of the stair, treading on nothing, darkness, space. The old man was crashing down, unable to see, therefore unable to save himself from crushing, painful blows, his body striking the stairs and falling against the banister. He cried in terror, a cry of desperation as he continued plunging to destruction on the floor below. He felt blood pouring from his forehead and nose, skin splitting, bones snapping, a fog of intense pain.

Charlie crashed to the floor, landing heavily on the shotgun, the barrel prodding his stomach... There was an earth-shattering explosion, filling the darkness for a millisecond with angry red fire, echoing down the corridor.

*Silver moonlight, cascading, flooding the hospital grounds. The roundabout, still grating, still moving, a never ending journey; neither faster or slower. The soft voice hesitatingly singing the words of the age-old song. There was*



nothing visible.

One by one there were others, all of them children's, soft and clear as tiny bells chiming through the air. Singing to the disc of radiance spinning across a cloud-stream, night time sky.

Finally, there was one more, a rough, uneducated, ageing voice; uncertain of the words, though gaining confidence...

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## COME TO CLAY

The wild wind lifts its mother caress off an ancient land  
and the sod is straining;  
it heaves and ruptures to a tiny, complex canyon cupping  
his rising pats,  
all cracked and scarred, unsightly  
and whole.

Look not on Thyngol!

His skull, so old, now wanders alone,  
its body long since transmuted to less-than-dust,  
but this head is malignant, vile  
and whole.

Think not of Thyngol!

Mage he was,  
now dead spells, brewed with soil and worm,  
issue hissing from purpled fissures -  
pillared ghosts on dancing stars;  
nor ponder eyes where eyes are not,  
still they watch and foully leer  
phantom levins from seedling hollows,  
an evil, ensorcelled sight.

Heed not Thyngol!

The chattering gibberish of creaking jaws  
is unholy as a coffin hinge unrusting,  
and that whispering in the hills,  
that soft sussuration at sunset  
- these are not night's heralds,  
but the castings of Thyngol. Mage!

Wait not for Thyngol, he waits for you.

There is no hiding - no secret way.

Wait not on Thyngol, he laughs at you,

and his song,

his song, is

"Come to clay!"

Gordon Larkin



# The WRITER In Pandom: Eddy C. Bertin

ON THE COLLECTING OF REJECTION SLIPS AMONG OTHER THINGS:  
Or, You Really Thought You Could Be An Author In Your  
Own Country?

(This article originally appeared as the Guest Editorial  
in Dave Sutton's SHADOW, issue 13, May/June 1971.)

Something small and dark, running down the stairs in a haunted house; a terrifying invasion of flying saucers I never saw; and a nightmarish monster from Earth's end... that's how it all started.

The 'something dark' may only have been in the mind of a frightened seven year old boy, but it scared the hell out of me nevertheless, and I can still see it as it came down towards me in that gas-lighted, ghostly house where I spent part of my youth. I never did see THE INVASION OF THE FLYING SAUCERS, a Curt Siodmak-scripted sf film of the fifties, and from what I later read about it, it proved it was no loss at all, but it made me really mad when I wasn't allowed to go and see it when it first played in Gent. Armchair psychoanalysts, this is your Big Chance to recreate the factors, giving birth to the horror author: a severe shock in early youth, buried in the subconscious and resulting in a trauma related to the supernatural, with a perverse desire to do exactly what is forbidden and unusual. If you write me a really kind, flattering letter, I might throw in a couple of neuroses and psychoses (I hate spiders, see?)...

So at my thirteenth year (no pun) I began writing horror stories, later continuing with straight sf. And in due time I found out that people thought I really could write.

That's when the troubles began.

Somehow the odd twenty-five volumes of stories I'd accumulated by then seemed a bit of a waste on a reading public of five people. So I learned to create a presentable manuscript, made a long list of Belgian publishers and began to annoy them with letters and stories.

Then I discovered that Someone Up There didn't like me. Or my stories. Or maybe both. Maybe they didn't think it quite sane for someone of my age to write about such things as vampires and witchcraft, sadism, satanism and werewolves, UFO's and other worlds and dimensions. Besides, it wasn't publishable, there was no real violence in it and no sex, see? Who would want to read it anyway?

So as lost children they came back to me, my pretty manuscripts and my not so pretty creatures, they were returned from all the mainstream magazines and the newspapers, and the publishing houses, and from Belgian radio and TV, and from literary contests. Not from fanzines and not from literary agents, because if there were any around I was unaware of them.

I felt mildly surprised but not angry. After all, I wrote for my own pleasure and if no one else was interested, well I didn't care.

Then along came The Monster From Earth's End.

I had been angry about the lack of sf being published in Dutch language. My reading of French was poor, my stock of German translations was exhausted and the publishers kept forgetting to send me their new issue lists. So there was only one solution: I taught myself the English language, by and for the reading of sf, starting with Murray Leinster's The Monster etc.

Then I got sick, very sick even. I got Publication fever. I began writing to bookmellers and correspondents, to magazine and fanzine editors, and before I quite knew what I was doing, I was writing articles, reviews etc, for four, five, six of them and more.

Shortly afterwards I realized that in fact, there was a market for my stories. I bought a set of paperback dictionaries and began to translate my stories in German, French and English. Being rather naive I sent my first tortured constructions, none longer than 500 words, to the Big Names.

That's when I began collecting rejection slips. But not for long.

The French didn't like my stories, but one was printed in a fanzine in Austria nevertheless. I discovered this only two years later, and to my rather heated complaint, the female editor (pretending to have lost my address... twice) answered that she would send me (besides a copy of the magazine) a 'Manuel du Savoir-Vivre'. I never got that, but I forgive her. In a *Beicon* '70 report, I've read she has pretty legs, and you know, one day I might meet her. I just like legs, nothing to do with this article, just thought you'd like to know. Any female fans around, please take note and drop in any time. But call first, I'll see that my wife is out then.

The Germans never even bothered to send a rejection slip, but I got real nice ones from all the rest. After a time one begins to appreciate the nuances. Like *F&SF*, they use pretty coloured covers with the rejection on the back. *ANALOG* and *GALAXY* use simple printed sheets, *FANTASTIC* and *AMAZING* too, but you have to write twice to get any response (please remember that I'm writing about 1967 here). Mainstream magazines mostly don't bother to answer or return anything. Most publishing houses write a nice letter acknowledging the receipt of the manuscript, and reject it the next month. And some editors... some really DO write a letter and say WHY they reject your story. Thanks, John Carnell, Harry Harrison, R.A.W. Lowndes, Kenneth Bulmer, Philip Harbottle, Richard Davis, Robert Aickman, and David Sutton, and anyone else I might have forgotten. You've all been a great help.

After some time in fact, I was beginning to tire of rejection slips. After all, nuances or not, they all said the same: your story is not wanted. I had a long sf story, specially written for a literary contest (whose prize was never given away) lying around, and after my wife had made a rough first draft translation, I rewrote the thing, titled it, *The Ashes At World's End*, and presented it to an sf magazine, the then experimental *NEW WORLDS*. They rejected it but wanted to see more of my work (they never bought anything). I was at a loss what to do with the thing. It treated a new step in evolution, in a completely closed, futuristic society, and the experimental use of typography made it unsuitable for any regular sf magazine. Then accidentally I bought a copy of the original anthology *NEW WRITINGS IN SF*, and without any real hope sent the story to editor John Carnell. He bought it, on the condition that I rewrite some parts which were difficult to print (the typography you know). Thanks to him, incidentally, the story appeared almost exactly as I had written it, as *The City, Dying* in *NEW WRITINGS IN SF* 13. About two months later I sold my second story, a horror tale originally tried on *SUPERNATURAL STORIES* before. Herbert van Thal accepted *The Whispering Horror* for *THE 9TH PAN BOOK OF HORROR STORIES*, and both saw print the next year, 1968.

Since then I have specialised in the English and American markets, mainly with horror stories and only rarely with straight sf, at first translating only, but now I'm able to write immediately in English. Of the odd twenty stories (including a 15,000 word novella) I've finished these last two years, more than half are professionally sold and published or accepted for publication; and almost all are accepted by fanzines, and two or three of which I'd rather forget myself. Strange, it's not the best stories which are sold. I'm still trying to place my own two favourite stories, without luck so far.

I did not completely forget Belgium, and late in 1969 I began trying again, thinking that now they might have become interested in sf. After all, every month new titles appeared in paperback, all translations from English and American authors.

What I didn't realize was that they had to pay far less for a translation than for an original manuscript. Why should they bother trying to publish an unknown native author, when there were so many Big Name authors whose work guaranteed good sales, and of which they only had to translate?

I sold two stories to original anthologies in Holland. What I got for them bought my cigarettes for two months. A literary magazine in Gent (Belgium) published my *HORROR HOUSE*, a collection of thirteen new horror stories, as a special issue. I didn't receive a cent, and even had trouble in obtaining half of the copies they had promised me! A literary agent specialising in sf told me that he had no market for Belgium horror stories...

but if I could write them in English he'd be glad to try and place them in the USA. A beginning publisher in Gent made me compile a 250 page collection of original sf and horror stories called NIGHTMARES FOR TOMORROW, which took three full months of my spare time, at the end of which he had to reject the whole project without even a word of explanation, exactly one hour before the contract was to be signed.

Other Belgian and Dutch publishers have been equally as nice, some asking for manuscripts for lecture (which costs me \$3 everytime on postage) and then returning them without bothering to explain why, others just return them without ever having read them. It's a nice country here!

That's when I said GOODBYE to Belgian sf. Why should I keep on writing in a language no one wants, when I can sell my stories in English?

My stories, articles, reviews, essays, poetry, artwork etc were being published in France, England, America, Italy and in Belgian fanzines (yes, now we do have a few of them!), two of them being special issues with my stories. In between all this they also presented me with the Belgian sf award for the best original sf story in 1970. Which was all very nice and flattering...but didn't pay enough. I tried publishing my poetry myself in a collection called OUT OF THE DARK AND LONELY PLACES, in English language, but which I intended to sell to Belgian fans at the first Sfan Convention in April 1970. I did give away six copies at the con and sold three, a pure financial loss of over 2000FRF. It isn't easy trying to be a sf/horror author in Belgium, and it is even harder trying to become one in the English-language. Here are several factors involved:

1. THE WRITING. I'm a spare-time author, meaning that writing comes after the usual working and household duties. I'm writing in a language which is after all not my own, and I still do need my dictionaries for second and third drafts of a story. Usually each story sent to an editor should be a clean front copy, which is nearly impossible, as some editors keep a manuscript for a year, some never return it or return it soiled. If a story is published, the manuscript is kept and I use a carbon copy in presenting it a second time to another market. Writing in English opens up two wholly different markets: England and the USA, plus the fact that one can sell a story to a magazine (first magazine publication only), to an anthology (first book publication) and maybe even include it in a collection of one's own stories. So one has to work with a number of carbon copies, something I loathe, because it is a time-wasting job and slows down the actual writing. Plus the fact that I am a slow typist (the most I can manage is 1500 words an hour) and that I still can't afford an electric typewriter. Also the art of finishing a story so that it reads absolutely "right" often requires three to four drafts.

2. TIME & POSTAGE. Working with overseas publishers creates a big time lapse as no manuscripts are sent by airmail. So where it takes a Belgian publisher one month to return something, returns from England take up to three months and from the USA sometimes up to a year. Postage to those countries are three or four times the Belgian, and return postage must always be included. All of which comes rather costly.

3. THE MARKETS. These are rather limited, don't pay very much and are hard to "crack". First of all, the magazines. England has now no magazines of horror or sf left, but there's still the USA, where rates for first magazine publication vary between 1c and 4c a word. Competition is very tough here, they are flooded with manuscripts and have to be very selective. The rest is up to the original anthologies. The American ones are practically out of reach, who knows who to write to for ORBIT, NOVA etc, but these also have to take the very best only. They do pay well however, but here something else comes into play: How to KNOW they exist. There are only a few yearly published anthologies, and all the rest are compiled without me even knowing that someone WAS compiling them.

4. WHY? People sometimes ask me, "WHY write that...stuff?" (pronounces it as a dirty word, or with compassion and pity). They ask, "why don't you write something else, like a good sex novel?" Well, I have no idea what financial rewards that might bring, but when I think about the fact that PLAYBOY pays \$50 for an original after-dinner joke, it makes one think. You know, maybe that WOULD be the solution. Maybe I really should change sides and drop what I have been writing and reading up until now. I do happen to like sex and eroticism.

Trouble is, I hate cheap pornography. And I just love sf and horror stories.

Anyone interested in a nice collection of rejection slips?

SON OF 'ON THE COLLECTING OF REJECTION SLIPS AMONG OTHER THINGS':  
Or, Several Excuses trying to explain why I don't write so much  
anymore, instead of simply stating that I'm a Lazy Bum.

(This sequel being dated today, August 24, 1974).

When I wrote the original article sometime halfway in 1970, I said that in order to make money I would have to change to writing sex. Well, I discovered S.E.X. You know, all those weird things birds and bees insist on doing, and some other things my wife kept on insisting were true. So finally having discovered the facts about life, I began insisting that Sex Is A Part Of Everyday Life Even In Sf And Horror, And It Has To Be In Any Story.

Oddly enough, publishers didn't agree.

I thought they didn't get the point, so I put it a bit more explicit the next time.

Oddly enough, publishers said I couldn't write the damn stuff.

So I added some graphic details and working schema's, this time making sure they just HAD to understand what I meant.

Publishers said I was a Dirty Old Man.

That's a bloody lie! I'm not OLD, not even thirty (yet), though I will be by the time this is published. Thirty, I mean.

Anyway, I started a new set of rejection slips.

And so it goes, Vonnegut would say.

Coming to the point is that since 1970 I tried my hand (rather, my typewriter - and I have an electric Olympia now) at several other things. Now let's see how they worked out. I tried stories for younger readers, sold a horror novella and three sf shorts. This type of writing is much harder for me however, being used to a grown-up audience I have to remember to work with short explicit sentences, work with teenage heroes, avoid violence and sex. Payment however is better than for normal stories...it only takes even longer to reach the author. I tried a film script, horror this time. Three years ago, last I heard of it was that two Dutchmen were somewhere in Sweden trying to raise the money to make their film...but they DID promise me £400 upon acceptance. I only never saw a signed contract (and not a cent either). I did translations, a few shorts (who paid less than if I had written them myself), and a novel from German into American (and this one paid more than I ever got for one of my own books). I did anthologies too, put together a fat 50-story volume NURSERY ROOM OF TERROR including several original stories. No contract either, though it's more than two years ago, and IF it ever appears it probably will only be a thick paperback of some fifteen stories. In the meantime I also put together a collection of 'shock' horror tales and a 'new wave' sf anthology. If they are accepted (and appear) at least for each anthology, including all the work, I'll get as much as if I'd sold ONE of my own stories.

What about these stories now? I haven't published much in English language since then, mainly reprints of my own translations in anthologies such as YEARS BEST HORROR (two stories in both English and American editions), 1972 ANNUAL WORLDS BEST SF (both in hardback and pb in England and USA), and also in anthologies in Spain, France, Germany and Holland. Often the anthology-reprints paid more than the original publications. For instance, for an original in Spain I received £3, and for the reprint in England £36! Mostly however, I'm sticking to Belgium and Europe: my second collection (all weird) was very well received, and my third is ready in manuscript (all sf) and will be published sometime in 1975. I sold a Dutch vampire novel to a pulp publisher, then rewrote and expanded it, took a professional translator and so sold it to a German pulp series. As these paid rather well, I'll be writing some other original horror novels for them, as soon as the first one is published. Total number of published stories today is 142, not bad at all. I am also editing and publishing (and writing most of the contents) a critical magazine in the fields of sf, fantasy and horror. The thing is monthly, and at the moment I'm only four issues behind schedule.

In England and the USA however, no such luck. If you want to read real terror stories, if you want to feel the delightful shiver of REAL horror, you'll just have to start learning Dutch (meaning, then you can read MY stories).

I took an agent in England, and another one in the USA. They tried, both being dedicated

and nice men...but sell? Oh no, not a single damned story. The English agent had to state that publisher's just weren't interested in short story collections, certainly not (I guess) by a practically unknown author that side of the sea. The American agent frankly said that my language just wasn't that, and I must admit after all, I'm NOT English or American, and I suppose it shows in my translations. But there's not much I can do except take a professional translator, and I presume they'll ask more in fees than I'd get for the stories. I have been working on two novels in English also, but why should I stick to these when there ARE now markets in Belgium and Holland for my kind of stories? There are a few loosely scattered stories still to appear. David Sutton has one in an original anthology, A Pentagram for Censid which should be in THE SATYR'S HEAD AND OTHERS, and the American magazine WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY have been sitting on six of my stories for three or four years now. Then there are some others here and there, but I don't have much hope they'll ever appear. One should be in an issue of BALTHEUS and I sent one to David for the last issue of SHADOW but I don't know if he'll use it.

I had intended to switch completely to sf in English, but as I said, then the markets opened up here. And after all, Dutch IS still my own language.

There may be a far more logical reason for the whole thing about my English stories, of course, and I might tell you if you promise to keep quiet about it.

You see, the hell is I just can't WRITE!

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# A Prisoner Of The Snow

The noise of the leaves,  
Brushing against a background  
of white array.  
Mingling, tingling, with a crisp  
desolate tang.

The background of a fairy-land  
Heavy minds disagreeing with  
Summer, and sun.  
No life to it, but it feels alive,  
Like a being that sweeps its  
opponent off its feet and surrounds it.

The tall trees lack silhouette against  
the tall sky.  
Footprints give you reassurance  
of life.  
Life that was once,  
And once stood where I stand,  
...A prisoner of the snow.

***peter wilcockson***





# *A Shade Upon The* *Radiance* BY JOHN HURLEY

The city was of opal.

Possessed with a myriad of resplendant towers of polished gem; yellow-white with high-spots of elusory gliding turquoise that lived shyly upon the glossy bends of these stone mega-needles that reared impossibly upwards to the strange lustre-strapped sapphire sky.

The streets were of green opaque quartz, smooth and clean, and touched with a gentle diffusion that was soothing to the very soul of the brain.

Such a place was not made by infants in science:

Such a place was not made without delving into the visions of sorcery.

Mirro, infatuated by design, moved in slow steps of amazement at the fabulous flood of pattern, his eyes mesmerised by bliss for this place resurrected the ideas of fantasy that used to circle in his youthful dreams: he loved its peace, for silence was here as reward for sight.

He toured and mingled among the spires and in upward periodical gazes saw the slim arch that united them in the clear heights, and dark enterances poised where the stream of these bridges met the skin of the cylinders, and these were the only doors that existed to his look; no windows were ever here.

Mirro felt the polished quartz of the walkways, it was precious and without dust. He slipped loving fingers over a towers feel, and ran stumbling hands across slender ramps ere he ever stepped upon them:

Such was his path.

Pillars of white opal, whipped with muddled streaks of ochre decorated small arenas and at spaces solemn giant obelisks of red granite studded with jet lanced the skyways: and all this deserted.

Mirro was from beyond this planet's view, his craft destroyed by roaming rocks of iron, and he had been ejected, encased in a blue alloy sphere which had danced him for a dull age through the spangled blackness, his heart in silent survey through the lone port till this world spun wreckingly through his dreamland.

With kear blood, and a glaring eye to the magnifier he observed the blue seas and the hues of the land, and its mass being akin to his own globe he rolled down and docked near the city.

Mirro's palms contacted the beautiful existence as he walked in wonder with sparkling splendour leading him in a drifting quest of no ultimate end.

Then came the hour he saw the square.

The wide space of a floor milky-yellow that was possessed, for it held a hypnotic delight to the mind as imprisoned smoke struggled in its foundation: Mirro stood upon it in reverie.

It seemed another lifetime before his eyes swept up from that trance of exquisite captivity and saw a pedestal at the far centre, and a violet gleam of form was there.

He strolled toward it on tender feet. It was a small block of ordinary gray slab and the design atop it was odd.

Was it a frozen stream of anethyst; for that was its call, then he saw the faded whiteness of two feet that had been and he knew that what remained was the carved cloak of a missing statue, and that fact was acid upon his fancy and he stared anew at the many towers, cones and cylinders that encircled his position and the silence brewed a threat that crouched hidden below the lofty abodes.

Mirro walked out of that square dressed with a stern countenance but once in the haze of enchanted jewel light his mood evaporated and he smiled again and his eyes glittered upon the world as he reclined on an open ramp and sated his spirit off the extravagant views.

In the time that churned a cool glint signaled and confused his eye and he espied upon

an arc an amethyst figure that looked at him; a stance that was as immovable as the city itself.

Mirro arose easily, his eyes locked to that form in weariness and as he moved away the distant form walked too!

Mirro, his body arid of joy, saw the moving figure go fast into the dim doorway of a near tower.

He ran from that action, and he ran. His feet slapping loud about the spaces and he skidded and fell many times and he cursed the fine surface of the green ways.

Far from his fear he lay spread again in weary rest and his sight looked the length of a tower that climbed from his horizontal head, and upon an arc that spanned through the sun he saw the gold of that star fuse through an amethyst brilliance which he knew was the figure.

Mirro stood in stone fear and headed away, his eyes touched to the alien, who he saw clearly at this angle, and that being did enter a tower and a soft flash of pearly light was emitted from the gloomy arch.

Mirro trotted through the void, his silver pupils pulsating with disruption from blasting brainwaves as they scoured the iridescent crowns to the sky, and among various moments the cloudy light would blink and the amethyst one would peer down. Upon many towers did this occur and Mirro exhausted did grip the red gun at his waist; he could not outpace teleportation devices.

Perspiration dampened the orange silkiness of his jacket as Mirro leaned against the opal gloss of a cylinder and awaited the chaser.

A gentle flash called his eye and the alien above strode urgently across a beam, he studied Mirro for moments then with a slight press of his foot caused the arc to descend in silent power; Mirro drew the weapon of destructive heat.

Slowly the figure sunk from its high domain and Mirro saw it was formed as himself, but his material was of sheer assimilated gemstone; 'twas a horror to the ancestry of the traveler.

The being stepped from its transport and walked to face him, Mirro was gripped with tension as the thing-man halted close. Eyes of darting blackness moved upon it, the nose and lips were unliving though carved in beauty and short robes were solid upon its frame.

Its arms shifted quickly in gesture.

"Be greeted to Elsaajara", was a sentence that flew and the fabric of the words hurt Mirro's head as they came not from any tongue but from the night of the being's brain.

"Empty places", was the reply that was put and then plucked from the back of Mirro's wrinkled brow.

"Purposely", answered the being. "I am Zevh".

Mirro wavered at the power of the words and miety spirals burst at the rear of his eyes: another sentence strained his balance. "Designer of death to the boards that once welled here".

"Destroyer", whispered Mirro.

"I say again. I am Zevh; created a long aeon past as a statue of wisdom in the square of Inghir-Vek. An immobile intelligence of trapped truth and constant cruel slave to the residents of thought converse".

"A grisly oracle", were the thoughts that drifted loosely about Mirro's head.

Zevh's meanings tumbled quick and orderly into his conscious senses.

"But I who was created as wise as the wisest could only extend in wisdom and I conspired in the far reaches of my reason to ascend. I foresaw my climb and I had visions of my intentions".

"Stop!" shouted Mirro. "My head aches with strange vibrations".

The plea was small and ignored, Zevh could not be held away from these revelations; he lust to converse.

"I whispered ideas to the distant ears. I erected plate atom by atom in my discourse to the questions of the civilized and fright enlarged in the fleshy pits of their abdomens and they tore at each other like winds of legend, splintering their intellect, cracking their sanity".

Suddenly pictures exploded into existence in the orb of Mirro's cranium and he saw the

many ruinations of life, and he knew that they slayed with fatal thoughts that stung like grin arrows of hot eruption into the greatness of their understandings.

Mirro's senses spun in giddy fear and he slippingly remembered his own logic and the simple but relevant question that formed in the hall of his skull: "Where are the people. Let them see me".

The anesthetist figure moved back at the need: "They are confined in their towers, the nine million minds are all there", and his artistic hand touched a shaped surface at a cylinder's base and a elice slid nimbly aside and the eyes of Mirro saw a mass of decayed bodies, bones and skulls that crushed each other in the design of Zevh.

An ancient spirit of imprisoned air assaulted Mirro and he gasped in traumatic horror.

Zevh hid the sight that showed and came in reach of Mirro, and Mirro raised the red gun in a shivering grip as sweat dripped deadly into his eyes and he suffered not to close them. Zevh was upon a joyous brink but then a negative aura spurted out as the red gum spoke and radiant jets of white fire splashed over him.

A jab of raw pain was thrown through the head of Mirro, reeling him for a few steps. The weapon effect dulled the skin of the alien for scant seconds then it shone healthy again.

Mirro stood aghast.

"Fool", blared the hurting substance of Zevh's words. "Cause me not to discipline you".

Mirro fired again as intellect died beneath the thorns of fear and he backed away hoping distance would ease his assailed brain.

No damage appeared upon the alien.

The stance of the pen-man was a menace of titanic terror and strength, and in a long second of silence and challenge Mirro reversed the gun and seared himself and he fell in a sprinkling of vapouring blood.

The pain was more upon Zevh and his scream was as thunder to Mirro's sigh and with invisible hooks of thought he threw the body of Mirro about the streets like a zombie-puppet of the netherworld doing the bidding of a mad master, then the form dropped and lay as a sorry deed upon the glassy way of his former sunshine, and Zevh held his own head as a silent internal shout rang his making.

"O great fool as you are", were the words he lashed the twitching brain of Mirro with. "I sought you no harm. My gifts were to be the zenith of dreams and living visions to be awarded to you, and you soft creature were to be my company".

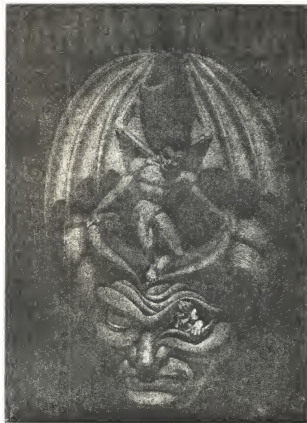
Zevh moved to the sunken arc and upon it he rose to the sky in the reigning and continuing solitude of two thousand cycles.

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(Continued from page 35.)

Itself it is inescapably as horrible as the Witchfinder's prior doings. Even THE EXORCIST gave us an escape. I've not seen much of Bergman (only THE SEVENTH SEAL), so it would be wrong of me to comment on the major portion of the article, but I think that overall, Ramsey was circumscribing a trend in modern cinema (beginning with PSYCHO). I don't think that Ramsey decries the modern trend either, but prefers the offer of hope in Bergman's work (did he in THE SEVENTH SEAL). I think we would all prefer that - I remember walking rather dazedly empty out of WITCHFINDER GENERAL, something one doesn't do with THE EXORCIST, for all the hoo-ha and publicity. Incidentally, Ramsey mentions THE BIRDS, one of only two films which I keep hearing people moan about because the "ending wasn't right". The other was 2001 (but I think they mean the regency drawing room scene, not the rebirth). However, THE BIRDS ended for me on just the right note - who would know what could happen next? There's hope that the birds might cease their onslaught, but even if they did, could we ever be sure that it wouldn't happen again? Hitchcock did it just right, and I think I preferred this film to PSYCHO.

Going over the lettercolumn, we see some varied comments and I like to see a good response coming from the membership of the society. Ramsey takes me to task over Leiber's BLACK GONDOLEER which I referred to in my Cosmic in Fiction article two issues back. He can't find my "amorphous blob" in that story. Hmm, nor can I! What could I have been thinking of? I must admit I liked the tale, though I was comparing it with the essentially cosmic BIT OF THE DARK WORLD, which is perhaps my favorite horror story.



# The Unsuccessful Successor

## a look at FANTASY FICTION By Mike Ashley

During 1951 and 1952 the digest boom of science fiction magazines was well underway. New titles like GALAXY, OTHER WORLDS, IMAGINATION, IF, F & SF, competed against established pulp names like AMAZING, ASTOUNDING and THRILLING WONDER. In the midst of this turmoil New York publisher John Raymond decided it was time he jumped on the bandwagon.

In 1952 he wrote to author Lester Del Rey requesting a story for his new sf magazine. Del Rey complied, but upon visiting the publisher walked away as editor of the new title: SPACE SCIENCE FICTION. This was followed by a companion title SCIENCE FICTION ADVENTURES. With sf well catered for Del Rey turned his sights to the fantasy field. At the time Del Rey had entered the world of sf, with The Faithful in 1938, John Campbell had started the machinery working that would culminate in UNKNOWN, one of the greatest of all fantasy magazines. Del Rey had shown a perfect affinity with UNKNOWN-style fantasy, and therein had appeared his exceptionally memorable stories like The Coppersmith and The Pipes of Pan.

UNKNOWN had succumbed to the wartime paper shortage in 1943, leaving only the venerable WEIRD TALES to cater for the fantasy market, and this was now a mere shadow of its former self. In 1949 Lawrence Spivak's MAGAZINE OF FANTASY & SCIENCE FICTION went some way towards filling this gap, and in 1953 Horace Gold was working on his own successor BEYOND. But just before Gold was Del Rey's FANTASY MAGAZINE.

The first issue was intended to appear in February 1953, which date appears on the contents page. But production problems resulted in a month's delay, and the magazine's spine is thus dated March. The standard digest size, it sported 160 pages for thirty-five cents, and this remained unchanged during its brief lifetime.

The first cover was a particularly excellent painting by Hannee Bok. Bok, quickly becoming a legend in his own lifetime, was 38 years old and at the height of his artistic career. Later that year he would win the Hugo Award (jointly with Ed Rushviller) for the best cover artist. Del Rey was fortunate in that he was able to boast Bok covers on all four issues of FANTASY MAGAZINE. All are brilliantly evocative and effective pieces, although the March issue still strikes me as amongst his very best work. No cover illustrated a scene from any of the contents, but this is just as well, as it gave Bok a free rein to draw as he wished.

With Del Rey as editor and Bok as cover artist, FANTASY MAGAZINE was already off to a good start, but things did not stop there. The cover of the first issue stated: "A New Novel By Robert E. Howard". How the eyeballs bulged. Gnome Press had only recently successfully issued their collections of Howard's Conan stories, and here, leading the first issue was a brand new Conan story. It was The Black Stranger, one of the stories discovered by L. Sprague de Camp and edited by him for publication. It is the story that appears in the Lancer CONAN THE USURPER volume as The Treasure of Tranigoe, although Howard completeists may be interested in the magazine version as it contains several variations, the works of both de Camp and Del Rey, although the Lancer version is the more polished.

L. Sprague de Camp became very much associated with the magazine, and admirers of his work would do well to search it out. When the second issue appeared in June, with its name subtly changed to FANTASY FICTION, de Camp was again present this time in collaboration with his old pal Fletcher Pratt with a brand new Harold Shea adventure, The Wall of Serpents, wherein our hero ventures in the alternative universe of the Finnish "Kalevala" legend. This episode was picked by Lin Carter to lead his Ballantine Adult Fantasy anthology GREAT SHORT NOVELS OF ADULT FANTASY: I (1972).

In the third issue (August) de Camp prepared a further Conan tale of Howard's The Frost Giant's Daughter (included in the Lancer CONAN OF CIMMERIA). (A third Conan yarn, The God in the Bowl, had already appeared in SPACE S.F. before FANTASY FICTION was born, a sure sign that Del Rey was not going to let such a sales-spinner slip through his fingers.)

De Camp was also present in the fourth issue with one of his own fantasy worlds - Kerne, and the adventurer Suar Peial (this tale was reprinted in Hans Stefan Santesson's anthology THE MIGHTY BARBARIANS (1969)). De Camp's colleague Fletcher Pratt was also in the fourth and final issue with a black magic story, Capital Expenditure.

I could stop there and already have named enough to make these issues imperative for collectors: Bok, Conan, de Camp...but there's more. Much more.

Let's study a few facts first though. The magazine certainly spared no cost for interior artwork. Art Director was Milton Berwin, and much credit is due him (though more likely Del Rey), for the kind of appearance given the magazine through its artists: paramount amongst them being Paul Orban, H. R. Smith and Alex Ebel. Kelly Freas was also present, and the magazine saw the professional debut of Roy Krenkel.

Del Rey wrote the editorials, at least for the first three issues. He also ensconced himself as one of the three associate editors under his alias Marion Henry, although from the second issue Evelyn Harrison held this place. Harrison, the former wife of Barry Harrison would later become Del Rey's third wife.

One must remember when viewing FANTASY FICTION in hindsight that names that are big names now were not necessarily big names in 1953. Nevertheless this in no way demeans their fiction, and it adds to the value of the magazine as a harbinger of big-name authors' early works.

For instance Foul Anderson, still regarded as more of a science fiction author, was a fine exponent of heroic fantasy as exemplified by Three Hearts & Three Lions serialized in F&SF later in 1953, and The Broken Sword which appeared in bookform the following year. In the first issue of FANTASY FICTION he offered an excellent novelette on the 'micro-god in modern day' theme, in Ashtaru The Terrible. He followed this with a female demon tale, Rachaela. Both are worthy of reprinting.

Robert Sheckley was also an aspiring name at this time. The first issue carried two of his stories, The Demons, wherein a human is summoned by a demon instead of the other way round; and a particularly grisly horror piece, Feeding Time under his Finn O'Donnovan pen-name.

Steve Frazee is a name not remembered today, sadly, since his long story Dragon Fires which closed the first issue, was a very fresh and highly readable amusing story told from the viewpoint of dragons, and very reminiscent of UNKNOWN. Perhaps some enterprising editor may yet see fit to reprint it.

Other new authors who made early sales to FANTASY FICTION were Philip K. Dick, Charles E. Fritch, Algie Budrys (whose first sale Walk To The World had been made to SPACE S.F. and whose The Weebies for PANTASY was one of the few humorous of stories it published), Randall Garrett and Stephen Arr. Most of these stories were above average if not over-memorable.

British authors were represented in the shapes of Peter Phillips, whose femme-fatale yarn Sylvia is well worth attention, and John Wyndham with two stories that later appeared in his JIZZLE collection.

As for my own favourites, besides de Camp's various appearances, issue three's stories Koenigsbaufen's Curse by the unpredictable H. B. Pyfe, an intriguingly sly fantasy, and Leah Bodine Drake's Pory's Follow are hard to beat. Drake is a poet who appeared in both F&SF and WEIRD TALES, and wrote all too few fantasies.

As you can see in just four issues FANTASY FICTION carried a kaleidoscopic range of imaginative fiction, right from humorous sf through heroic fantasy to out and out horror. And as purveyors it printed the biggest and best names in fantasy.

And I haven't quite finished yet. Three more names are worth mentioning since they are probably the magazine's most unlikely contributions. Firstly, David Alexander. Who's he? You may well ask. Alexander, in the annals of sf/fantasy magazines has only appeared with two stories. The Other Ones, a most avant-garde fantasy for the time incorporating Jack The Ripper, Jesus James and The Wandering Jew under one roof, was his first appearance, in the third issue. Ten years later to the month he appeared again in the British NEW WORLDS

with an equally unpredictable story, The Disposal-Unit Man. Are these two David Alexander's one and the same? If so why the ten year gap and two stories in such disparate publications? Or was it a pen-name of a far better known author? Such questions as these are what make the collecting of fantasy so fascinating.

Secondly Clark Ashton Smith. Smith, one of the three greatest names in the history of WEIRD TALES, had all but forsaken writing fantasy in 1936. His name was so rare in the magazines by the Second World War and after, that to the new generation of readers he was virtually unknown. In all likelihood his appearance in the fourth and final issue of FANTASY FICTION caused little if any stir other than in the minds of old-timers. Yet today he is again at last recognised for the genius that he was, and Schizoid Creator is a rare example of his latter-day mind at work. It is also an intriguing original idea - ever thought of a devil with a split personality?

And finally, Laurence Manning, another name that would bring tears to the eyes of old-timers. Manning was one of the better contributors to Gernsback's WONDER STORIES, particularly his two brilliant series about "The Man Who Awoke" (a Wellsian-type adventure of a man reawakening at intervals into the far future), and "The Stranger Club" (the standard narration of marvellous adventures by members of a special club). When WONDER died in 1936 Manning's name virtually disappeared, like Smith's, but suddenly there he was in the third issue of FANTASY FICTION with a title, which modern day readers are quite likely to misconstrue: Mr. Mottle Goes Pout. But it is a light, breezy and thoroughly enjoyable short story.

Which all goes to show just how full of surprises the magazine was. In his editorials Del Rey revealed that the magazine had met with much success and was proving a viable publication. However, late in 1953 Del Rey fell out with Raymond over the problem of payments for stories. By this time Raymond had already had too much of the science fiction scene, and he decided to pull out altogether. Harry Harrison was brought in to wind up FANTASY FICTION, and the fourth and final issue is as much the work of Harrison as Del Rey, although the editor is given as Cameron Hall. Harrison was also present in that issue with a long story in collaboration with his then wife, Katherine MacLean, Web of the Worlds (which later appeared in a slightly revised version (and title) in the British SCIENCE FANTASY). A brilliant story, linking events with the mythical Norms, it is long overdue for resurrection.

Thereafter FANTASY FICTION was no more. Other stories were lined up for publication as advertised in earlier issues, but whether these ever appeared elsewhere cannot presently be traced. Had FANTASY FICTION continued there is no doubt it would have overwhelmingly changed the state of the genre. As it is with the 1953/4 boom over, rivals like BEYOND and COSMOS also bit the dust, and only FANTASTIC UNIVERSE and P&P carried the flag of fantasy through the 1950's. But FANTASY FICTION was an island unto itself. A natural successor to UNKNOWN with its adult treatment of fantasy, and its farthinking sensible editor, it was unfortunately the victim of a publisher who was only in it for what he could squeeze out of the field.

All this was twenty years ago, and we are now left with a legacy of the past from which we can only imagine what might have been. Just look at the following checklist of contents and read again those names who contributed to this short-lived venture. Not one wrote a bad story, and many wrote amongst their best. Where else could de Camp have practised his Conan stories? Where else could Sheckley have experimented with his fantasies? Where else can you find Clark Ashton Smith, Laurence Manning and Hannes Bok all in one magazine? Where else indeed. If you are a devotee of all that is good in fantasy fiction, then hunt out this magazine. It had everything.

Fifteen years later Del Rey would return with much the same aplomb to edit WORLDS OF FANTASY, but that's another story.

★ ★ ★

# a checklist of fantasy fiction

<u>Title.</u>	<u>Author.</u>	<u>Length.</u>	<u>Artist.</u>
<u>Volume 1. Number 1. February 1953.</u>			
Things That go Poomp.....	Cover by Hannes Bok Lester Del Rey.....	Ed.	
The Black Stranger.....	Robert E. Howard &....	26.2	P. Orban.
	L. Sprague de Camp.		
Too Gloomy For Private Pushkin.....	Richard Deming.....	3.0	K. Freas.
The Demons.....	Robert Sheckley.....	3.6	A. Ebel.
Ashtaru The Terrible.....	Poul Anderson.....	7.0	E. Emsch.
Feeding Time.....	Pinn O'Donovan.....	1.3	M. Berwin.
The Night Shift.....	Frank Robinson.....	3.0	H. R. Smith.
Dragon Fires.....	Steve Frazer.....	13.2	H. R. Smith.
<u>Volume 1. Number 2. June 1953.</u>			
A Comedy Of Terrors.....	Cover by Hannes Bok Lester Del Rey.....	Ed.	
The Wall Of Serpents.....	L. Sprague de Camp &..	24.3	P. Orban.
	Fletcher Pratt.		
The Weebles.....	Algis Budrys.....	2.5	K. Freas.
Emiseary.....	Charles E. Fritch.....	3.2	J. R. Eberle.
Samsi.....	Peter Coccagna.....	5.8	H. R. Smith.
Rachaela.....	Poul Anderson.....	7.4	A. Ebel.
The Cookie Lady.....	Philip K. Dick.....	3.0	T. Beecham.
Sylvia.....	Peter Phillips.....	3.55	K. Freas.
More Spinned Against.....	John Wyndam.....	4.2	H. R. Smith.
<u>Volume 1. Number 3. August 1953.</u>			
De Gustibus.....	Cover by Hannes Bok Lester Del Rey.....	Ed.	
"So Sweet As Magic...".....	Bruce Elliott.....	20.5	A. Ebel.
Out In The Garden.....	Philip K. Dick.....	3.1	K. Freas.
Much Ado About Plenty.....	Charles E. Fritch.....	3.5	Tyler.
The Frost-Giant's Daughter.....	Robert E. Howard &....	2.9	
	L. Sprague de Camp.		
A Stray From Cathay.....	John Wyndam.....	7.0	J. R. Eberle.
Koenigsbaufen's Curve.....	H. B. Pyfe.....	5.0	H. R. Smith.
Foxy's Hollow.....	Leah Bodine Drake.....	2.7	H. R. Smith.
Mr. Mottle Goes Pouf.....	Laurence Manning.....	3.3	
The Other Ones.....	David Alexander.....	5.7	Tyler.
Nom d'Uh Nom.....	Randall Garrett.....	1.6	
<u>Volume 1. Number 4. November 1953.</u>			
Non Multa, Sed Multum.....	Cover by Hannes Bok (No credit).....	Ed.	
Web Of The Worlds.....	Harry Harrison &.....	26.5	A. Ebel.
	Katherine MacLean.		
Nothing To It.....	William S. Corwin.....	0.9	
Schizoid Creator.....	Clark Ashton Smith.....	2.6	A. T. Sussman.
Medicine Dancer.....	Bill Brown.....	1.8	M. Berwin.
Capital Expenditure.....	Fletcher Pratt.....	14.2	H. R. Smith.
De Demon- Natur.....	Wesley Barfoot.....	1.2	R. Krenkel.
The Stronger Spell.....	L. Sprague de Camp.....	4.9	R. Krenkel.
The Apprentice Sorcerer.....	Stephen Arr.....	3.3	

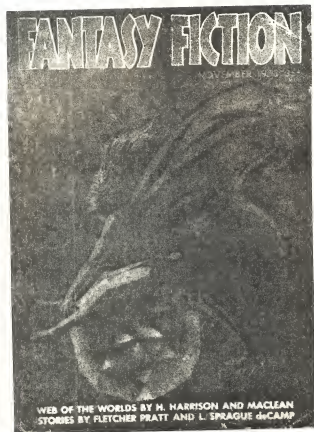
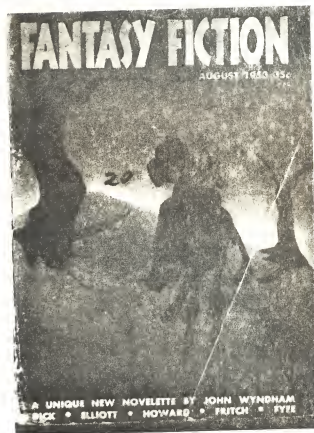
Notes: Ed. = Editorial.

Story lengths in thousands of words.

All issues contained 160 pages and cost thirty-five cents.

m.a.





# Letters of Comment~

From, TONY FRANCIS, Dorset:

After reading Dave Sutton's article Cosmic In Fiction in DBS (a really dismal magazine I'm afraid, notable for its absence of artwork and fiction) there are a few things I would like to discuss with fellow readers.

Firstly, how does one determine the difference between Science Fiction and Fantasy Fiction? Nowadays, modern writings in these genres seem to combine the two. We have sf stories with undertones of fantasy, and fantasy stories with undertones of sf. As Dave so rightly says, in my opinion, one must not concentrate on one limitation without considering the other - they are so closely connected.

Apart from this article, I'm afraid DBS was much of an anti-climax.

But, DBS was completely different. For a start, the out-line of the magazine was visually acceptable, with the introduction of substantial artwork and poetry (a much underrated facet of fantasy). Poetry, like fantasy, is pure imagination which is why, in my opinion, the two blend so well. Dave Sutton's article on Cosmic In Music was not as good as his article on fiction because it turned out to be little more than a review column. There was not much material brought up for further discussion.

As for the fiction. Well The Sorcerer's Book by Tom Kosty turned out to be nothing more than a regular S&S fare. Hell It's Late by John Martin was slightly better, with an amusing style. But, I do remember a similar story in a BUGS BUNNY cartoon, where the Devil sent out the same damned-soul to fetch the rabbit. But this damned-soul kept returning to Hell dead and empty-handed. Splat! by J. A. Le Saux was another of those stories which creep into the magazine because of its unusuality. Nevertheless, it was a well-written tale, and the macabre twist at the end was pure comedy.

Finally, if, as stated in the editorial, you are likely to remain as editor for a while, could you please tell me how you want material submitted to the mag for publication? How long do you want short-stories and is there any chance of having a serial accepted?

((I completely agree with your views about fantasy and sf, unfortunately, many areas of fandom do tend to try and ignore other sub-sections of the genre, two of the major culprits being the BFS and BSPA in this area. Occasionally writing can be categorised as simply horror, fantasy or sf, but all too often nowadays the barriers between these sub-sections become blurred and overlap, and the sooner fandom comes to accept this, the better. As for your questions about material for publication: I'd prefer to have all contributions typed and double-spaced; if you don't have a typewriter then please try to write as clearly as possible. There's no set rule about the length of short-stories, but I would take 1500 words as an average. I will certainly consider accepting a serial if it is very well written and I think it will survive the gap of four months necessary between issues. SF.))

From, ALAN HUNTER, Bournemouth:

Outstanding for me was the story by Thomas Kosty. The plot was very simple but the atmosphere and descriptive power was excellent, converting it into a little gem. I would have liked the opportunity to illustrate this.

Of the other two stories, the one by John Martin was well written but slight in content with a completely predictable ending, and the story Splat! (easier to type than the author's name) still has me scratching my head. I suppose the complexity of this short piece compensates - or possibly overcompensates - for the direct plotting of the other two.

Both of the articles were well researched and presented but without knowledge of the records or films referred to, they rather lost their point. As I had neither heard a single record, nor seen a single film mentioned, they - rather lost their point for me. This, undoubtedly, is a criticism of myself rather than the articles.

The Jim Pitte interview was most interesting to me. I have corresponded with Jim for some time now, but the feature revealed several things which we have never touched upon

in our letters. He deserves the limelight that this gave him and the accompanying illustrations came out very well - the fact that they still looked good despite the great reduction (and from prints) shows how well he has mastered relative tones in a rather laborious pen technique which could so easily become confused in less competent hands.

Illustrations by other artists displayed an interesting variety of talents, rounding out a well balanced issue. Your own drawing on page 12 was very pleasing. Very reminiscent of Virgil Finlay, but he has influenced my own work so much that I have little right to criticize on this score.

The poetry pieces were also well varied, and of quality, but I believe that to get the best out of them, poems should be given a full-page treatment, with the addition of pictorial border as in the old WEIRD TALES, rather than used as fillers at the bottom of a page. ((This is something I would love to have in DH, but at the moment I am severely restricted by money, and therefore space in the magazine. SJ.)) This means, of course, commissioning artists specially to present the poem which involves extra work and delay for the editor. If you accept this extra burden then I think it well worth the trouble, not only for poetry but for the stories as well. Illustrations which bear a direct relation to the contents always give the 'zine a more professional atmosphere.

From, DAVID A. SUTTON, Birmingham:

DH9 is as fine an issue as you will get from an editor for whom this is his first attempt at a fanzine. Steve has done remarkably well in a short space of time and he has immediately uplifted DH to the incredibly lofty realms usually reserved for only the most elite fanzines, whose readers tend to call them amateur magazines rather than "fan"zines. Of course, there is an additional problem with DH that the average reader and the fanzine editor will perhaps be unaware: The regular editor of a fanzine is usually god over his domain and can publish exactly what he likes most in the genre. DH's editor, however, must bend his preferences because DH must cater for all aspects of fantasy during its yearly production.

So with that in mind we cannot but approve of the contents of issue 9 on the whole. There have been nagging criticisms directed at me - why no sword and sorcery in DH? Well... I'm sure Steve will be catering for the S&S buffs (which includes myself) in the next issue: remember he can only work with the material he has on hand and he cannot possibly cover every aspect of the genre in one single issue. ((I thought S&S has been covered pretty well in DH: Thomas Hosty's The Sorcerer's Book in the last issue, Mike Chinn's story in this number, and beginning next issue: a three-part survey of the Heroic Fantasy field by Adrian Cole - now I'm going to get the horror fans complaining! SJ.))

As to the actual contents of number 9, well, on the fiction side, John Martin's HELL! IT'S LATE has the most appeal. Its humour spoke of Robert Bloch, yet here we are talking about an amateur writer and a fanzine. It also reminded me of something by Mary Elizabeth Counselman I think, but to get back to the point, if the byline for this story had been Bloch, I'm sure that an anthology editor would have snapped it up; which speaks well of the tale. Tom Hosty's Krobar tale I liked, but S&S seems to work better in a longer format and I found myself with surprise finishing the tale when I expected it to run on somewhat longer. Splat! - well I'm still figuring that one out, like I'm still figuring out Garner's RED SHIFT, but that's not really meant as criticism, Julian.

On the articles. I obviously can't talk about my own, so I hope somebody else will. The Artist in Pandom: Jim Pitts was one of the best ideas I've yet seen in the fanzine business and Dave's interview with Jim Pitts proved very interesting, plus there was plenty of illustrations to show us the work of this very capable artist. I hope Dave will continue the series with other fanartists.

I certainly agree with some of Ramsey's comments on the modern trend in the horror film: WITCHHINDER GENERAL has us begging revenge against the insatiably cruel Matthew Hopkins, but the final scene of slaughter is in itself a vision of total and inescapable violence. In films like THE HILL, revenge is available by the law, by the book, but the characters cannot wait for Sean Connery's carefully planned escape from the torment of himself and the fellow prisoners, and make the inevitable mistake. However, we feel somewhat satisfied. In the former film, however, we desire the only revenge suitable, yet are horrified that in

(Continued on page 27.)



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